United Nations S/2015/517

Security Council

Distr.: General
2 July 2015

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus

I. Introduction

1. The present report on the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) covers developments from 16 December 2014 to 20 June 2015 and brings up to date, since the issuance of my report dated 9 January 2015 (S/2015/17), the record of activities carried out by UNFICYP pursuant to Security Council resolution 186 (1964) and subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution 2197 (2015).

2. As at 31 May 2015, the strength of the military component stood at 859 for all ranks and the strength of the police component stood at 63 (see annex).

II. Significant political developments

3. After an almost seven-month hiatus, negotiations were officially relaunched on 15 May 2015 with the facilitation of my Special Adviser on Cyprus, Espen Barth Eide, during a meeting between the Greek Cypriot leader, Nicos Anastasiades, and Mustafa Akıncı, who assumed the leadership of the Turkish Cypriot community on 30 April. At the meeting, Mr. Anastasiades provided Mr. Akıncı with the coordinates of 28 minefields laid by the National Guard in the north of the island before and during 1974, to which I referred in my previous report. Mr. Akıncı announced that, from the following day, there would no longer be a requirement to fill in administrative forms at crossing points.

4. The positive momentum surrounding the resumption of the talks was further enhanced on 23 May, when the two leaders took a walk together in old town Nicosia, north and south and crossing through the buffer zone, during which they emphasized their common vision for a united Cyprus and their joint commitment to reaching a solution.

5. On 28 May, the leaders announced further confidence-building measures that would bring the two communities closer together, including working towards the opening of more crossing points, starting at Lefka-Aplici/Lefke-Aplıç and Deryneia/Derynia. They also agreed to take practical steps towards interconnecting electricity grids and instructed the Technical Committee on Economic and Commercial Matters to propose solutions to the important issue of mobile telephone

Please recycle

interoperability. Since the resumption of the talks, the sides have agreed to establish a committee on culture and a committee on gender equality.

6. During my telephone calls to both leaders in May, I welcomed the relaunch of the talks and encouraged both leaders to grasp the current opportunity with determination to secure a comprehensive settlement.

III. Activities of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

7. UNFICYP is intended first and foremost to prevent a recurrence of fighting and to contribute to the maintenance of law and order and a return to normal conditions. Its mandate requires reconciling security considerations and the maintenance of the military status quo with allowing Cypriots who live and work in the buffer zone to pursue civilian activities and enjoy full and productive lives. Such an approach, when successful, builds confidence between communities and contributes to the overall effort by the United Nations in support of the peace process.

A. Prevention of a recurrence of fighting and maintenance of the military status quo

8. During the reporting period, UNFICYP continued to maintain the integrity and stability of the buffer zone, minor military violations committed by both sides notwithstanding. Thanks to regular patrolling and its observation, reporting and liaison infrastructure, UNFICYP continued to avert attempts by both forces to effect low-level changes to the military status quo. However, the non-recognition by the opposing forces of the aide-memoire of 1989, the lack of a common understanding of the exact delineation of ceasefire lines and challenges to the authority of UNFICYP in the buffer zone continue to be of concern.

9. Building on the positive climate of the current and previous reporting periods, relations between UNFICYP and the two opposing forces continued to improve. More direct and effective lines of communication and regular meetings with the respective commanders at UNFICYP headquarters and at the sector level have helped to build trust and allowed for the closure of some long-standing issues.

10. During the previous reporting period, the Turkish forces removed approximately 30 soldiers from eight positions in old town Nicosia, where the opposing forces are in closest proximity to each other. The reduction was made possible through the installation of 28 closed-circuit television cameras. Although one of the cameras has since been removed, during the current reporting period there was no further reduction in military personnel at the 19 positions where the cameras remained, and two additional cameras have been installed in the Louroujina pocket in sector 4. Without a corresponding reduction, the cameras confer a military advantage and, as such, constitute a breach of the status quo.

11. Military positions established by both forces inside the buffer zone that violate the status quo remain in place, as is the case in Strovilia. Discussions with the Turkish forces on restrictions imposed on routine UNFICYP patrols in Strovilia since June 2014 resulted in the restrictions being lifted during the reporting period.

The United Nations continues to hold the Government of Turkey responsible for the status quo in Varosha.

B. Demining activity

12. On 30 December, mines were displaced into the buffer zone from north of the ceasefire line owing to heavy rain. The area, which is near Mammari in sector 1, is regularly patrolled by UNFICYP and farmed by civilians. Following an initial risk assessment by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in February 2015, a team of Cambodian deminers from the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) initiated mine-clearance operations on 26 May, as it had done a year earlier, also through inter-mission cooperation. As at 19 June, 4,275m², or approximately 15 per cent of the hazardous area, had been cleared, with components of two anti-tank mines and one anti-personnel mine identified and destroyed. To avoid a similar incident in the future, UNFICYP liaised closely with the Turkish Cypriot authorities and secured their commitment to clear the area north of the ceasefire line in the coming months.

13. On 4 June, I met Mr. Akıncı, who asked for assistance in addressing the challenge of the 28 minefields. In response, and with a view to facilitating future demining, UNFICYP and UNMAS, with excellent cooperation from both sides, worked to refine the data provided and map out the minefields, which are suspected of containing both anti-tank and anti-personnel mines. A survey to assess the scope of the contamination and the requirements for subsequent clearance started on 18 June.

14. The above-mentioned positive developments notwithstanding, no progress was registered on the issue of access to the four known remaining minefields in the buffer zone, of which three are under the control of the National Guard and one is under the control of the Turkish forces, despite requests by UNFICYP. Efforts continue at all levels to encourage both sides to advance a more comprehensive approach to demining both inside and outside the buffer zone.

C. Restoration of normal conditions and humanitarian functions

15. Relations between UNFICYP police and the police services of both sides remained cooperative and constructive, with daily communications enhancing cooperation and addressing operational matters within the buffer zone.

16. As part of mandated tasks to contribute to the maintenance of law and order, UNFICYP police continued to assist and facilitate investigations into criminal matters occurring within the buffer zone. This was the case in particular in the mixed village of Pyla inside the buffer zone, where an increase in criminal activities on the part of members of both communities was reported with regard to illegal casinos, the number of which rose from three to four during the reporting period. Efforts by UNFICYP to secure a practical solution to address criminal activities in Pyla are ongoing.

17. In parallel to the liaison on the ground, UNFICYP continued to facilitate the work of the Technical Committee on Crime and Criminal Matters. On 20 May, the Technical Committee organized a seminar on domestic violence prevention, which took place at the Ledra Palace Hotel in the buffer zone and which was well attended

by participants from both sides. The Joint Communications Room continued to provide a forum for information exchange on criminal matters with intercommunal elements, including investigations of crimes and humanitarian cases.

18. During the reporting period, UNFICYP continued to face challenges to its authority in the buffer zone and its personnel continued to be exposed to aggressive behaviour from individuals engaged in unauthorized activities in the buffer zone. UNFICYP urged the competent authorities promptly to address outstanding cases of assault against UNFICYP personnel and property. On a positive note, and after persistent efforts by UNFICYP, three hunters were convicted for entering the buffer zone with weapons and assaulting a United Nations police officer. Likewise, restrictions imposed on locally employed United Nations personnel entering the north were lifted on 15 February.

19. In line with its mandate to contribute to a return to normal conditions, UNFICYP continued to urge the authorities, local community leaders and civilians to cooperate with the mission by providing relevant information on civilian projects in the buffer zone in accordance with established procedures. In Pyla, small unauthorized civilian construction projects initiated by the Turkish Cypriot community led to heightened tensions during the reporting period. In one such instance, UNFICYP negotiated a mutually acceptable solution to transform the project into a bicommunal initiative that benefited both communities. The university in Pyla continues to operate without the authorization of UNFICYP.

20. From December 2014 to May 2015, 868,694 official crossings of the buffer zone were recorded. UNFICYP continues to play an important role with regard to all interactions at, around or through crossing points. Following the announcement by the leaders on 28 May, UNFICYP has been supporting the work of the Technical Committee on Crossings on the opening of crossing points at Lefka-Aplici/Lefke-Aplıç and Deryneia/Derynia, while facilitating discussions on possible additional crossing points to be opened in the future. UNFICYP police continued to provide escorts for convoys with civilians and humanitarian supplies at the Limnitis/Yeşilırmak crossing point, in accordance with the agreement reached by the leaders in October 2010.

21. UNFICYP continued to manage farming and other civilian activities in the buffer zone, issuing more than 944 permits for civilian activities and approving 22 out of 24 civilian construction projects. In support of civilian activities in the buffer zone, UNFICYP facilitated the maintenance of essential infrastructure for public utilities and services to both communities and encouraged the communities living inside the buffer zone to adopt joint approaches to issues, such as respect for the environment and cleaning.

22. UNFICYP continued to facilitate contacts between the two Nicosia municipalities to promote enhanced cooperation in old town Nicosia, where the buffer zone is at its most narrow. The mission facilitated six meetings of the Nicosia municipalities to develop joint projects on environmental, social and health issues of common concern. A joint walk along the Green Line on 10 March, which was facilitated by UNFICYP, allowed the two mayors of Nicosia to discuss ways of addressing day-to-day issues arising from the buffer zone.

23. Beyond the buffer zone, UNFICYP continued to provide humanitarian assistance, including through weekly deliveries to 345 Greek Cypriots and 109

Maronites residing in the north and by facilitating the post-mortem transfer of six Greek Cypriots for burial in northern villages. Logistical support and visits to the Greek Cypriot schools in the Karpas Peninsula continued. Although requests for Greek-speaking doctors to attend to the health needs of elderly Greek Cypriots and Maronites in the north were still to be addressed, Greek-language medical services were provided during the reporting period.

24. UNFICYP remained in contact with local authorities to ensure access for Turkish Cypriots living in the south to health, welfare and educational services. Although there were no new developments regarding the establishment of a Turkish-language school in Limassol, a full-time Turkish Cypriot teacher has been engaged at a high school in Limassol at which Turkish-language education is being offered as an option in the curriculum. Two full-time Turkish Cypriot teachers have also been assigned to a primary school attended by Turkish-speaking pupils.

25. During the reporting period, UNFICYP also assisted in addressing the legal and humanitarian issues faced by Cypriots detained in the area controlled by the other community through visits to the detention facilities where they were held. To enhance confidence in the judicial proceedings, UNFICYP attended one court hearing involving a Greek Cypriot in the north and four court hearings involving Turkish Cypriots in the south.

26. UNFICYP continued its efforts to foster bicommunal cooperation and reconciliation, including by supporting 70 civil society events in cooperation with international and local partners, at which nearly 5,000 individuals from both communities engaged in sporting, cultural, educational or other activities. One such event was a bicommunal football tournament organized in Pyla on 18 April with support from UNFICYP, which provided a much welcome opportunity for the two communities to come together and which is expected to be replicated in the future. Seven meetings between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political party representatives were held under the auspices of the Embassy of Slovakia at the Ledra Palace Hotel in the buffer zone, providing a forum for ongoing political dialogue. On 27 May, the political parties issued a joint statement in which they committed themselves actively to support and promote greater public participation in the resumed peace process.

27. Positive developments were also registered with regard to the reunification of Cypriot football, which is supported by both leaders. In late March, the Cyprus Turkish Football Association announced its intention to submit an application for membership to the Cyprus Football Association and, as a preliminary step, approved the harmonization of its charter with Fédération internationale de football association and Union of European Football Associations standards on 8 May.

28. Further progress was made during the reporting period in opening for worship religious sites in the north that had been inaccessible since 1974. UNFICYP facilitated 35 religious services and commemorative events involving more than 9,000 individuals that were conducted in the buffer zone or required crossings to the other side. Services were held for the first time at the Panayia monastery in Mandres and in the churches of Ayios Georgios Xalonon in Kato Zhodia, Ayios Georgios in Karavas and Ayia Eirini in Kyrenia. Separately, on 12 April UNFICYP facilitated the crossing of some 200 pilgrims from the north to the Hala Sultan Tekke mosque in Larnaca in the south.

29. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued to work with the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage on the protection of cultural heritage on both sides of the island. The restoration of six cultural heritage sites was completed during the reporting period. The restoration of Othello Tower in Famagusta was completed at the end of June, while significant progress has also been made in the restoration of Apostolos Andreas monastery in the Karpas Peninsula. Separately, and in support of a political settlement, UNDP continued to facilitate the Cyprus dialogue forum, bringing together 94 organizations from both communities, including political parties, business and industry organizations, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and wider civil society. The forum, which provides a platform for citizens to be heard with regard to the peace process, was formally launched through adoption of a declaration on 12 March in the presence of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot negotiators.

30. The Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce continued to provide a model for cooperation and to advocate actively for the solution of the question of Cyprus. During the reporting period, the Chambers worked on a number of initiatives, such as the launch of an intercommunal internship programme and a bicommunal business incubation centre. At the third meeting of the Nicosia Economic Forum, which was held in Athens on 5 February and which brought together the two chambers of Cyprus with the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey and the Union of Hellenic Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Greece, the importance of a solution in Cyprus and the possible contribution of the chambers to that outcome was stressed.

IV. Committee on Missing Persons

31. On 28 May, following their second official meeting, Mr. Anastasiades and Mr. Akıncı issued a joint statement in which they stressed the importance of the issue of missing persons and appealed for anyone with information to approach the Committee on Missing Persons. As at 16 June 2015, the Committee's bicommunal teams of archaeologists had exhumed the remains of 967 missing persons on both sides of the island. To date, the remains of 583 individuals have been identified and returned to their respective families, including 34 during the reporting period. Since the beginning of 2015, the Turkish forces have given Committee excavation teams access to two additional military areas, one following a written request sent by the Committee, and the other following the accidental discovery of human remains during construction work.

V. Financial and administrative aspects

32. As indicated in my previous report, the General Assembly, by its resolution 69/296, appropriated the amount of $52.54 million gross for the maintenance of UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, inclusive of the voluntary contribution of one third of the net cost of the Force, equivalent to $17.61 million, from the Government of Cyprus and the voluntary contribution of $6.5 million from the Government of Greece.

33. As at 24 June 2015, the total outstanding assessed contributions to the special account for UNFICYP for the period from 16 June 1993 to 24 June 2015 amounted

to $16.95 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to $1.9 billion.

34. As at 24 June 2015, amounts owed to contributors for troop costs totalled $1.08 million. The reimbursements of troop and contingent-owned equipment costs have been made for the period up to 30 April 2015 and 31 March 2015 respectively, in accordance with the quarterly schedule.

VI. Observations

35. I note the positive momentum surrounding the resumption of the talks, as well as the energy and dedication displayed by both sides. I welcome the commitment expressed by the leaders to work tirelessly to reach a comprehensive settlement of the question of Cyprus as soon as possible. I encourage both leaders to grasp the current unique opportunity to create a peaceful common future for the island. I intend to submit a detailed report on my good offices mission in the fall of 2015.

36. I also welcome the commitment by the leaders to seek early agreement on confidence-building measures, and I urge them to take decisive and pragmatic steps towards tangibly implementing those measures in good faith and without delay. The agreement of the leaders to measures such as the interconnection of electricity grids and mobile telephone interoperability will, when those measures materialize, have a significant positive impact on the daily lives of people in both communities.

37. I further welcome the decision of the two leaders to establish a committee on culture and a committee on gender equality, the purpose of the latter being, inter alia, to bring a more equal understanding of the perspectives of both women and men into the peace process. The decision of the leaders to open additional crossing points is a particularly welcome development and one that increasingly has been called for by the communities at the grass-roots level. I encourage the sides to agree on further suitable locations for crossing points. Likewise, I commend the decision of the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr. Akıncı, to facilitate crossings by removing the requirement to complete administrative forms at crossing points. UNFICYP will continue to lend its facilitation assistance and to help to coordinate works to realize new crossing points.

38. The progress made in demining is tangible. I commend the decision of the Greek Cypriot leader, Mr. Anastasiades, to provide information on the 28 National Guard minefields currently in the north. As I informed Mr. Akıncı, I am committed to providing all possible assistance to facilitate the clearance of what remains of those 28 minefields. For its part, UNFICYP, with support from UNIFIL and UNMAS, is clearing the affected area inside the buffer zone so that patrols and farming activities can resume. I thank Cambodia, under the framework of inter-mission cooperation, for agreeing to the temporary redeployment of its mine-clearance team from UNIFIL to UNFICYP, and I thank the Security Council for its ongoing support to this operation. I also welcome the cooperation of the Turkish Cypriots in committing to clear the Turkish forces' minefield adjacent to the ceasefire line near Mammari.

39. With the opening of new crossing points, which will require mine clearance around the ceasefire lines, a comprehensive approach to demining is now required. I call upon both leaders to intensify their efforts to that end, to facilitate, without

delay, access to all remaining mined areas inside and outside the buffer zone, in line with Security Council resolution 2197 (2015), and to achieve, finally, a mine-free Cyprus.

40. UNFICYP continued to promote civilian use of the buffer zone, provided that it did not affect security and stability. Such activities, undertaken in accordance with UNFICYP procedures, promote trust between the communities, particularly projects that are jointly agreed. In that light, I once again call upon the respective authorities to act decisively towards all who engage in activities not authorized by UNFICYP, thus showing respect for the Force's authority in the buffer zone, supporting it in the implementation of its mandate and avoiding unnecessary tension at this time. I welcome the lifting of restrictions on the freedom of movement of locally employed United Nations personnel to the north.

41. The security and environmental challenges in old town Nicosia, and in particular in the militarized area within the Venetian walls, where the buffer zone is at its most narrow, need to be addressed. I reiterate my call for both sides and their respective leaderships, the mayors and municipalities of Nicosia and those in charge of the Nicosia Master Plan to adopt a holistic approach to the urban infrastructure of the old town through joint projects that could attract investment and thereby transform the wider area. Together with the opening of new crossing points and a reduction in military personnel, such an approach could contribute to a greater sense of security and a return to normal conditions along the Green Line, as well as promoting public confidence between the communities.

42. The advances made in reuniting Cypriot football are also encouraging and convey a powerful and positive message to the public on both sides. I appreciate the leadership of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot football associations for their commitment and I encourage them to complete the process, with continued support from Mr. Anastasiades and Mr. Akıncı.

43. I commend once again business leaders for their vision, and I encourage enhanced support by all concerned for their efforts to promote private sector initiatives that could have a positive effect on the continued regrettably low level of trade crossing the buffer zone, despite a reported 3.1 per cent increase in its value in 2014.

44. In previous reports, I have called upon both community leaders to exert efforts to create a climate conducive to achieving greater economic and social parity between the two sides and to widen and deepen economic, social, cultural, sporting or similar ties and contacts, including with a view to encouraging trade. Such contacts promote trust between the communities and help to address the Turkish Cypriots' concerns of isolation. I am pleased to note that early steps in this direction are being taken by the leaders, and I urge them to continue to address these issues. Likewise, I encourage the sides to fully engage civil society in the ongoing process, with a view to fostering grass-roots support for a solution.

45. The dialogue among the leaders of the religious communities continues to make good progress by fostering understanding and overcoming mistrust. I strongly encourage both sides to support the dialogue, including by enabling further access for worship to the more than 500 churches and other places of worship in the north and the some 100 mosques in the south.

46. In the background to the above-mentioned welcome developments, the situation along the ceasefire lines remained calm and stable. At the same time, minor incidents and challenges, which passed largely unnoticed by the wider public, remained a regular occurrence. Frequent unauthorized civilian activity in the buffer zone, resulting in part from a perception of greater security, also further complicated the overall security situation in the buffer zone. In that context, the Force's regular patrolling and liaison with the opposing forces and the respective authorities continued to play an important role in preventing an escalation of tensions.

47. In the current positive climate, and in the light of the commitment of the two sides to build trust between the communities, it is more important than ever that the opposing forces respond positively to the Force Commander's efforts to strengthen relations and engage actively with UNFICYP on military confidence-building measures. I call again upon both sides to formally accept the aide-memoire of 1989, bringing an end to the contestation of the United Nations delineation of the ceasefire lines.

48. Although the lifting of restrictions on the freedom of movement of UNFICYP is a welcome development, Strovilia, along with other positions established inside the buffer zone, remains the location of a permanent violation of the status quo. Likewise, while closed-circuit television cameras can help to monitor criminal activity in the buffer zone, such installations constitute a military advantage and a violation of the status quo if unaccompanied by a reduction in military personnel. I therefore strongly encourage further reductions in the military presence along the ceasefire line, including in the 21 locations equipped with the cameras.

49. It is also incumbent upon the sides, without further delay, to find a practical and mutually acceptable solution to addressing the illegal activities in Pyla, which are a growing source of concern for the communities residing in the village. The absence of an agreement to date on a way forward has become a source of tension between the sides, including at the political level. I once again call upon both sides to work with UNFICYP to find workable and safe policing solutions to criminal activities in Pyla.

50. The United Nations remains committed to supporting the critical humanitarian work being done on behalf of the families of victims through the Committee on Missing Persons. While I welcome the results achieved by the Committee during the reporting period, I also note that, 50 years after their disappearance, half of all missing persons have yet to be located and more than 70 per cent have yet to be identified. It is critical that the work of the Committee suffers no further delays. The aforementioned statistics and the advancing age of the relatives of the missing persons highlight the need to expedite the process, including through an accelerated granting of access to military areas by the Turkish forces, as has been the case during the reporting period.

51. UNFICYP continues to play an important role on the island by exercising authority in the buffer zone and contributing to keeping the peace and resolving various issues that affect the daily lives of individuals in both communities. Its ability to play this role, however, depends by and large on the commitment of the two sides to refrain from challenging its authority and legitimacy in the buffer zone. In calling upon both sides to continue to cooperate with UNFICYP in good faith, I recommend that the mandate of the mission be extended for a period of six months, until 31 January 2016.

52. UNFICYP continues to maintain close collaboration with my mission of good offices and other United Nations actors on the island. In line with the relevant Security Council resolutions, most recently resolution 2197 (2015), the mission remains engaged in contingency planning in relation to a settlement. The planning will continue to be guided by developments in the negotiations and the views of the parties on the possible role of the United Nations in that regard.

53. At the same time, I will continually keep the operations of UNFICYP under close review, taking into account developments on the ground and the views of the parties, and will report to the Security Council with recommendations, as appropriate, for further adjustments to the UNFICYP mandate, force levels and concept of operations as soon as warranted.

54. UNFICYP may be expected to play a critical support role in the coming period in helping to implement further confidence-building measures that may be agreed by the leaders, for example, in facilitating and overseeing demining efforts in accordance with International Mine Action Standards and in effectively monitoring, securing and ensuring the integrity of any new crossings through the buffer zone. In particular, the mission's capacity to respond effectively may be tested and may need to be reviewed.

55. I once again express my gratitude to the 34 countries that have now contributed since 1964 either troops or police or both to the mission, and I pay tribute to the 186 peacekeepers who lost their lives over that period in support of peace in Cyprus. It is incumbent upon all parties to work in a determined manner towards a comprehensive settlement, to which all Cypriots aspire and which would obviate the continuing need for a peacekeeping presence.

56. I would like to express my appreciation to my Special Representative and Head of UNFICYP, Lisa M. Buttenheim, including for her commitment and dedication in serving as my Deputy Special Adviser. I also would like to thank the UNFICYP Force Commander, Major General Kristin Lund, for her service in the past year. UNFICYP continues to lead the way in increasing the numbers of female personnel across the military, police and civilian components. Finally, I extend my thanks to all the men and women serving in UNFICYP for the efficiency and commitment with which they have discharged the responsibilities entrusted to them by the Security Council. I also express my appreciation to my Special Adviser, Mr. Eide.

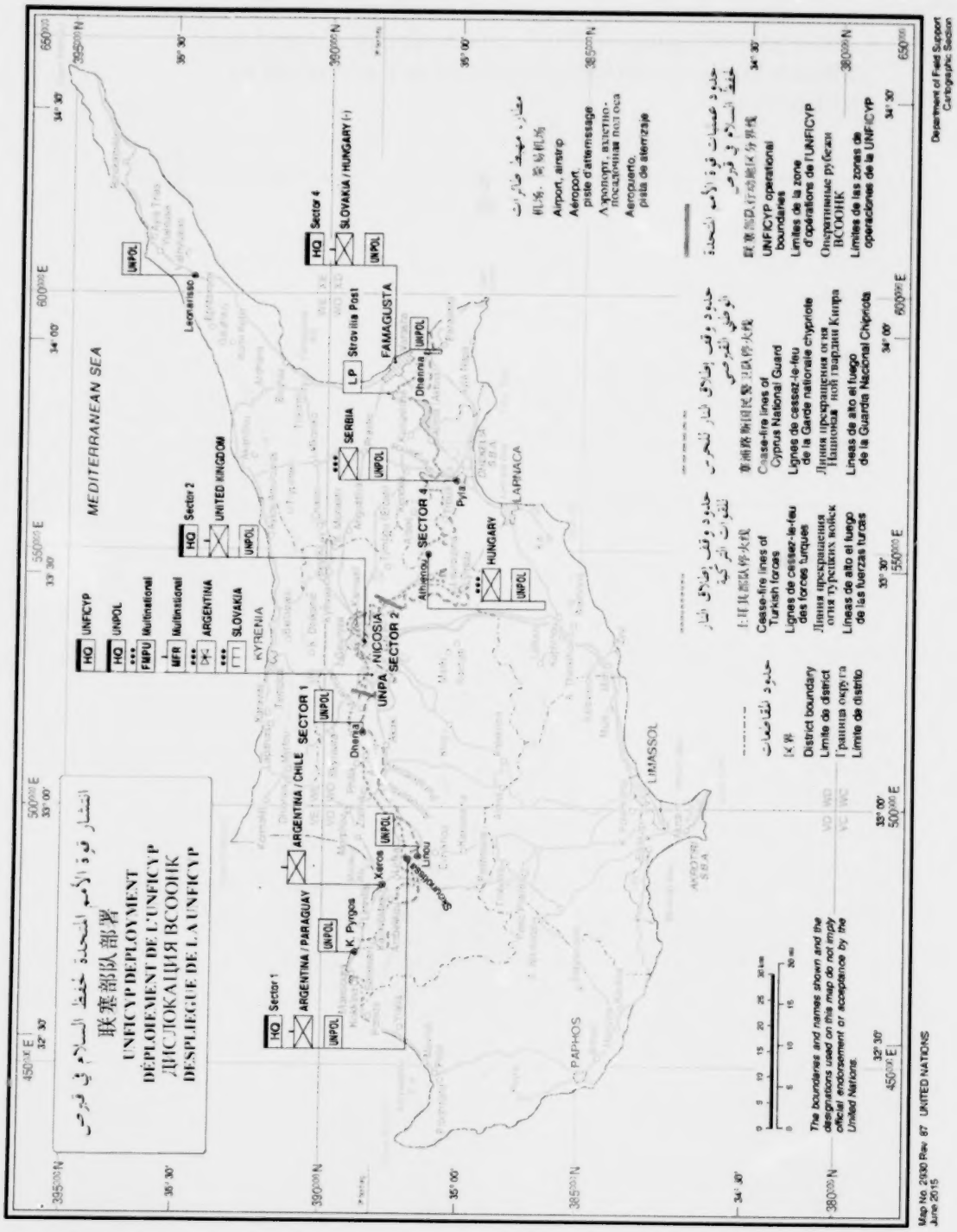
Annex

Countries providing military and police personnel to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (as at 31 May 2015)

Country	*Military personnel*
Argentina[a]	294
Austria	4
Canada	1
Norway	2
Hungary[b]	84
Slovakia[c]	200
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	274
Total	**859**

Country	*Police personnel*
Australia	15
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8
China	2
India	8
Ireland	12
Lithuania	1
Montenegro	4
Romania	2
Serbia	2
Slovakia	2
Ukraine	7
Total	**63**

[a] The Argentine contingent includes soldiers from Brazil (1), Chile (14) and Paraguay (14).
[b] The Hungarian contingent includes soldiers from Serbia (7).
[c] The Slovakian contingent includes soldiers from Serbia (39) and Ukraine (2).


UNFICYP DEPLOYMENT
DÉPLOIEMENT DE L'UNFICYP
ДИСЛОКАЦИЯ ВСООНК
DESPLIEGUE DE LA UNFICYP
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
HQ Sector 1
ARGENTINA / PARAGUAY
ARGENTINA / CHILE
HQ Sector 2
UNITED KINGDOM
ARGENTINA
SLOVAKIA
HQ Sector 4
SLOVAKIA / HUNGARY (-)
SERBIA
HUNGARY
UNFICYP
UNPOL
Multinational
UNPA
SECTOR 1
SECTOR 2
SECTOR 4
NICOSIA
LARNACA
LIMASSOL
PAPHOS
FAMAGUSTA
Dhekelia
Pyla
Athienou
Dhenia
Strovilia Post
Leonarisso
K. Pyrgos
Xeros
Dhenia
Lefkonikon
Linou
Cesse-fire lines of Turkish forces
Lignes de cessez-le-feu des forces turques
Линия прекращения огня турецких войск
Líneas de alto el fuego de las fuerzas turcas
Cesse-fire lines of Cyprus National Guard
Lignes de cessez-le-feu de la Garde nationale chypriote
Линия прекращения огня Национальной гвардии Кипра
Líneas de alto el fuego de la Guarda Nacional Chipriota
UNFICYP operational boundaries
Limites de la zone d'opérations de l'UNFICYP
Опоясняющая ВСООНК
Límites de las zonas de operaciones de la UNFICYP
District boundary
Limite de district
Граница округа
Límite de distrito
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Map No. 2930 Rev. 87 UNITED NATIONS
June 2015
Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

United Nations S/2015/518

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 July 2015

Original: English

Seventh report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013)

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) and covers developments pertaining to the issues of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, since the issuance of my previous report, dated 29 April 2015 (S/2015/298).

2. During the reporting period, bilateral relations between Iraq and Kuwait strengthened further. On 28 May 2015, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, met in Kuwait with the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, Sheikh Khalid Mohammed al-Sabah, on the sidelines of the forty-second meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Sheikh al-Sabah reaffirmed the support of the Government of Kuwait to the Government of Iraq, as well as its commitment to assist current efforts to restore Iraq's stability, security and unity. On 1 June, the Department of Foreign Relations of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq officially received the credentials of the new incoming Consul General of Kuwait to Erbil. On 10 June, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait announced a contribution of $200 million to ease the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. On 17 June, a planeload of 20 tons of medicine and medical supplies arrived in Iraq as part of the air bridge of relief supplies provided by the Government of Kuwait as a sign of solidarity with the people of Iraq.

3. Budgetary constraints and limitations set by the security and economic situation in Iraq have hampered work on the search for missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. The Government of Iraq, however, is persisting in its efforts to achieve results. In this regard, the Minister for Human Rights of Iraq, Mohammed Mehdi al-Bayati, headed the Iraqi delegation at the ninetieth session of the Technical Subcommittee of the tripartite mechanism, as well as the fortieth meeting of the Tripartite Commission, which were held in Kuwait on 18 and 20 May, respectively, under the chairmanship of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

15-11374 (E) 090715 100715

Please recycle

II. Recent activities with regard to the repatriation and return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals, or their remains

4. On 21 April, following the briefing by the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights on the importance of maintaining the momentum in its work despite the difficult fiscal situation, the Council of Ministers approved the budget allocation from the emergency reserves for the Ministry's activities on the missing persons file for the second half of 2015. On 7 May, the Iraqi interministerial committee on missing Kuwaiti nationals convened under the aegis of the Ministry of Human Rights to discuss the plan of action for the remainder of 2015, including scheduled excavation and exploratory missions, as well as the availability of witnesses and information on potential burial sites.

5. During the reporting period and in carrying out his responsibilities under resolution 2107 (2013), my Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs continued meeting with relevant Iraqi and Kuwaiti interlocutors to urge forward movement on this important humanitarian file. During his visit to Kuwait from 18 to 21 May, my Deputy Special Representative met with the Kuwaiti National Committee for Missing Persons and Prisoners of War Affairs, the Minister for Human Rights of Iraq, and the Ambassador of Iraq to Kuwait, Moh'd Hussein Moh'd Bahr-Aluloom. The Chair and members of the National Committee for Missing Persons and Prisoners of War Affairs stressed the need for the Government of Iraq to create new dynamics and look at different search methods and modalities that could achieve tangible results, particularly within the already available forensic and technological resources in Iraq.

6. For his part, the Minister for Human Rights of Iraq emphasized his country's strong commitment to carry on fulfilling its obligations in the search for the missing persons. He noted that all politicians in Iraq were aware of Iraq's international obligations and its duty towards Kuwait, whom they see as their closest regional partner. The Minister, however, noted that the current liquidity crisis was seriously hindering progress on the file.

7. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) participated as an observer in the ninetieth session of the Technical Subcommittee of the tripartite mechanism, which was held on 18 May in Kuwait. During the meeting, the parties agreed to review the present state and the efforts carried out so far to come up with new ideas and approaches to reinvigorate the file and achieve tangible results. To that end, it was decided that experts would be involved in future meetings to acquaint members of the Technical Subcommittee with the available technology that has proven successful in the field to assist the Subcommittee in devising a holistic strategy.

8. During the session of the Technical Subcommittee, Saudi Arabia stated that its national authorities had difficulty in identifying the location of a potential burial site on its border with Kuwait. That information had been shared following the provision of additional details by a witness. Consequently, the Government of Iraq requested support from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other relevant members in providing relevant documents from their respective archives. The Government of Iraq indicated it would also seek further clarification from the witness.

9. My Deputy Special Representative attended the fortieth meeting of the Tripartite Commission on 20 May in Kuwait, during which the members of the

Commission supported the renewal of the observer status of UNAMI within the mechanism for another year.

10. On 1 June, my Deputy Special Representative met in Baghdad with the Head of the Department of International Organizations and Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Ahmed Bamarni, who acknowledged technical, financial and logistical problems in the search for the missing persons. Ambassador Bamarni expressed his commitment to raise with the Minister of Finance the need to secure liquidity and to ensure that the Ministry of Human Rights was able to cover the current needs of the operation.

III. Recent activities with regard to the return of Kuwaiti property

11. The current reporting period failed to register any major forward movement with regard to property. In his meetings with Iraqi authorities, my Deputy Special Representative has stressed the need to maintain momentum in this important area. He urged both sides to consider convening the Joint Property Committee, which last met in June 2014.

IV. Observations

12. I welcome the positive and constructive relationship and cooperation between Iraq and Kuwait across all aspects of mutual interest. Kuwait's pledge to provide $200 million in humanitarian funds to alleviate the suffering of internally displaced persons in Iraq is particularly commendable. The expanding partnership between the two States is a strong indicator that the ties will only grow closer with time and hopefully lead to full normalization of relations. I believe that the spirit of mutual support that currently exists should be built upon to bring new momentum on the file of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, so that concrete results are achieved on this important humanitarian issue.

13. I commend the commitment of the Government of Iraq to continuing work on this file while trying to address the multiple challenges that the country is facing. I further welcome the decision of the Council of Ministers to allocate the necessary funds for the activities of the Ministry of Human Rights in support of the search for the missing persons for the second half of 2015, even while faced with severe budgetary constraints. I note with regret, however, that continued efforts have not led to substantial progress on the file. It has been 11 years since the last set of human remains was found in excavation. And it has been 25 long years that the families of the missing persons have been waiting to learn the fate of their loved ones.

14. I recognize the need to reassess the sole reliance on traditional search methods, as they have proven inconclusive with the passage of time. I am confident that reviewing the activities carried out to date and exploring alternative search methods will help to overcome the standstill. With this in mind, I urge the Government of Iraq to consider employing modern technology and new approaches to devise a holistic strategy on the way forward.

15. The tripartite mechanism, under the able chairmanship of the International Committee of the Red Cross, remains vital in addressing the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals. I am grateful that the observer status of UNAMI has been extended, allowing it to continue to play a supporting and facilitating role in this important humanitarian commitment. I am pleased that a positive and constructive atmosphere of partnership and cooperation prevails among the members, showcasing their enduring dedication. I welcome proposals and innovative ideas on the way forward to be tabled at the upcoming meeting of the Technical Subcommittee in September 2015.

16. I note the lack of progress with regard to the missing Kuwaiti property. I call on the Government of Iraq to bring in innovative search methods and targeted information campaigns to locate the national archives. I further encourage the Joint Property Committee to meet regularly to bring needed progress on the file.

17. I further encourage the Government of Iraq to use the expertise and assistance of UNAMI in facilitating its efforts in the search for missing Kuwaiti persons and property. I reiterate the strong commitment and dedication of UNAMI and my Special Representative and Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs in playing the mandated role in full measure.